Tupac's Poetry Toolbox
Backgound Information & Terms Necessary to Understanding *The Rose That Grew From Concrete*

Use these definitions, taken from the Meyer Literature Site, for your "Literary Terms" Handout Packet (also known as "McKemie Gold")

Backgound Information
Tupac Amaur Shakur

- June 19, 1971 - September 13, 1996
- Birth Name: Lesane Parish Crooks
- Nick Names: 2Pac, Makaveli, Pac

Tupac Amaru Shakur

Biography

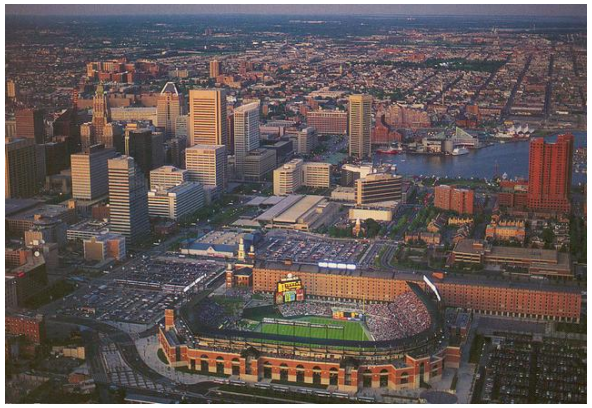
Tupac Amaru Shakur was born on June 16, 1971, and was named after an Inca Chief. As a child, his nickname was the "Black Prince." He grew up in the Bronx, New York, where his mother, Afeni Shakur, was a member of the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther Party was an organization dedicated to education and civil rights. Tupac Shakur had a sister Sekyiwa, who was two years younger than he. He did not have contact with his father, and his sister's father, Mutulu, was jailed for sixty years for armed robbery. The family fell on hard times and moved frequently. This created some insecurity in Tupac, as he never had an opportunity to make lasting friends. He found solace in writing poetry and love songs. He kept a diary, in which he noted that he would one day be famous.

At the age of fifteen, Shakur attended the Baltimore School for the Arts, where he studied acting and, surprisingly, ballet. It was there that he began to feel as if he fit in. He loved school and planned to become a musical artist.

In the late 1980s, he formed a group called Digital Underground. They released several records that met with success. In 1992, he broke away from Digital Underground and began a solo career. His solo debut, *2Pacalypse Now, propelled him to stardom. He also began* acting in films. Between rapping and acting, Tupac began a five year period of rapid success in the music business. After being shot on September 13, 1996, Tupac Shakur died. He was only twenty-five. He had often said he would die before he was thirty. As of 2005, no one has been charged with the crime. There are numerous theories about the murder, but nothing has been proven.

Where He Grew Up

- Grew up primarily in Harlem
- Moved to Baltimore in 1984
- And moved again in 1988 to Oakland, California



Harlem, Baltimore, Oakland

Literary Terms

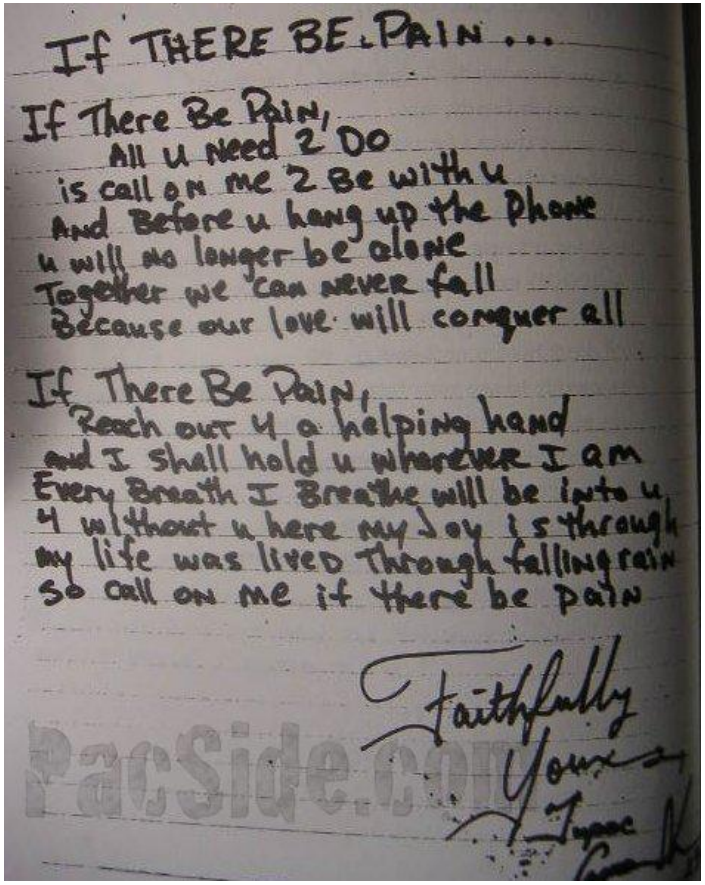
Allegory

- A narration or description usually restricted to a single meaning because its events, actions, characters, settings, and objects represent specific abstractions or ideas. Although the elements in an allegory may be interesting in themselves, the emphasis tends to be on what they ultimately mean. Characters may be given names such as Hope, Pride, Youth, and Charity; they have few if any personal qualities beyond their abstract meanings. These personifications are not symbols because, for instance, the meaning of a character named Charity is precisely that virtue.

Couplet

- Two consecutive lines of poetry that usually rhyme and have the same meter. A heroic couplet is a couplet written in rhymed iambic pentameter.

If There Be Pain



If THERE BE PAIN ...

If There Be Pain,
All U Need 2 DO
is call on me 2 Be with U
And Before U hang up the Phone
U will no longer be alone
Together we can never fall
Because our love will conquer all

If There Be Pain,
Reach out 4 a helping hand
and I shall hold U wherever I am
Every Breath I Breathe will be into U
4 without U here my Joy is through
my life was lived Through falling rain
So call on me if there be pain

Faithfully
Yours

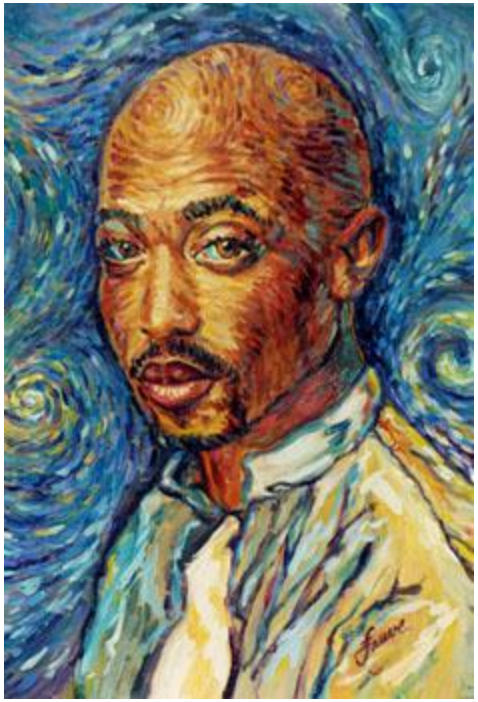
Dialect

- A type of informational diction. Dialects are spoken by definable groups of people from a particular geographic region, economic group, or social class. Writers use dialect to contrast and express differences in educational, class, social, and regional backgrounds of their characters.

Elegy

- A mournful, contemplative lyric poem written to commemorate someone who is dead, often ending in a consolation. Tennyson's In Memoriam, written on the death of Arthur Hallam, is an elegy. Elegy may also refer to a serious meditative poem produced to express the speaker's melancholy thoughts.

Starry Night



STARRY NIGHT

Dedicated in memory of
Vincent Van Gogh

a creative heart, obsessed with satisfying
this dormant and uncaring Society
u have given them the stars at night
and u have given them Bauntiful Bouquets of Sunflowers
But 4 u there is only contempt
and though u pour yourself into that frame
and present it so proudly
this world could not accept your Masterpieces
from the heart

So on that starry night
u gave 2 us and
u took away from us
the one thing we never acknowledged
your life

Starry Night: Vincent Van Gogh

End rhyme

- most common form of rhyme in poetry; the rhyme comes at the end of the lines.

It runs through the reeds
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade.

Rhyme scheme

- describes the pattern of end rhymes. Rhyme schemes are mapped out by noting patterns of rhyme with small letters: the first rhyme sound is designated a, the second becomes b, the third c, and so on. Thus, the rhyme scheme of the stanza above is aabb.

Internal rhyme

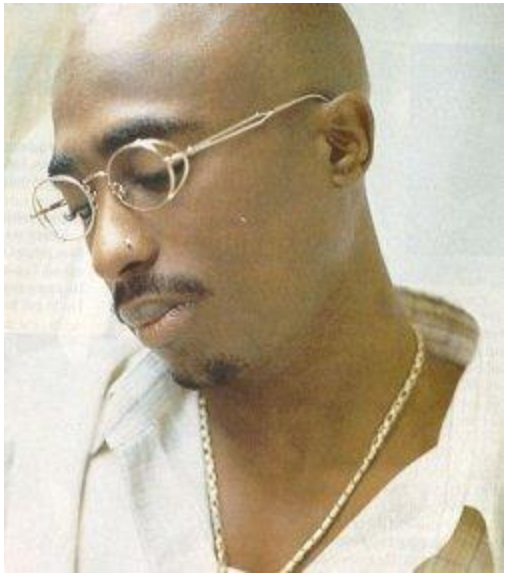
- places at least one of the rhymed words within the line, as in "Dividing and gliding and sliding" or "In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud." Masculine rhyme describes the rhyming of single-syllable words, such as grade or shade. Masculine rhyme also occurs where rhyming words of more than one syllable, when the same sound occurs in a final stressed syllable, as in defend and contend, betray and away. Feminine rhyme consists of a rhymed stressed syllable followed by one or more identical unstressed syllables, as in butter, clutter; gratitude, attitude; quivering, shivering. All the examples so far have illustrated exact rhymes, because they share the same stressed vowel sounds as well as sharing sounds that follow the vowel.

Near rhyme

- **(also called off rhyme, slant rhyme, and approximate rhyme**), the sounds are almost but not exactly alike. A common form of near rhyme is consonance, which consists of identical consonant sounds preceded by different vowel sounds: home, same; worth, breath.

Half Rhyme - a near-rhyme; one that is approximate, not exact. Also called slant rhyme.

Examples: keep/neat, friend/wind.



Foot

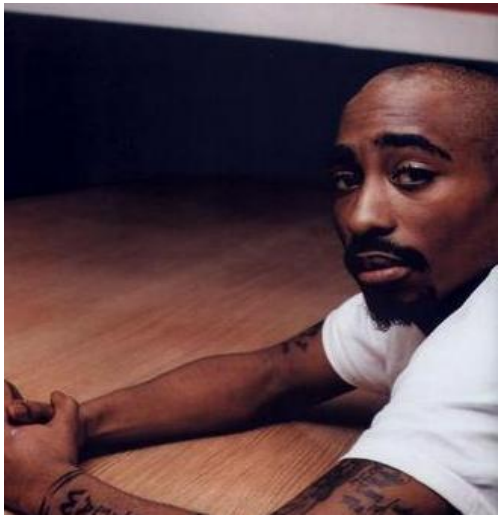
- The metrical unit by which a line of poetry is measured. A foot usually consists of one stressed and one or two unstressed syllables. An iambic foot, which consists of one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable ("away"), is the most common metrical foot in English poetry. A trochaic foot consists of one stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable ("lovely"). An anapestic foot is two unstressed syllables followed by one stressed one ("understand"). A dactylic foot is one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed ones ("desperate"). A spondee is a foot consisting of two stressed syllables ("dead set"), but is not a sustained metrical foot and is used mainly for variety or emphasis.

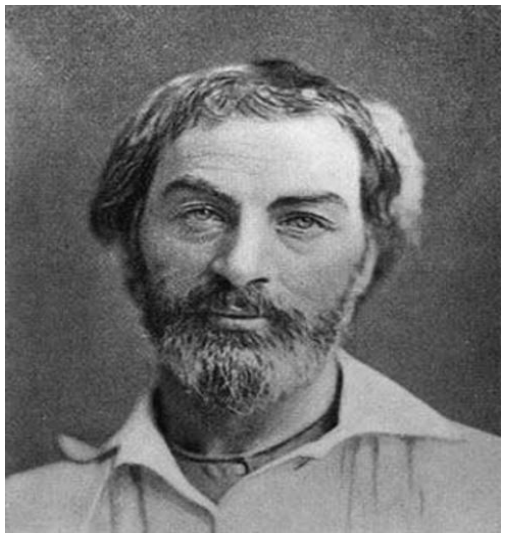
Examples: “To be/ or not/ to
be/” consists of three feet of two syllables each. “Amidst/ the mists/ he spied/ the girl/” is made up of four feet, each with two syllables. “Comprehend/ the meaning/ of rhythm” uses three feet of three syllables each.

Free verse

- Also called open form poetry, free verse refers to poems characterized by their nonconformity to established patterns of meter, rhyme, and stanza. Free verse uses elements such as speech patterns, grammar, emphasis, and breath pauses to decide line breaks, and usually does not rhyme.

- poetry that has no formal rhyme or meter and depends on the rhythms of speech. **Example: Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.**





Hyperbole

- A boldly exaggerated statement that adds emphasis without in-tending to be literally true, as in the statement "He ate everything in the house." Hyperbole (also called overstatement) may be used for serious, comic, or ironic effect. See also figures of speech.

Line

- A sequence of words printed as a separate entity on the page. In poetry, lines are usually measured by the number of feet they contain. The names for various line lengths are as follows:
- monometer: one foot
  dimeter: two feet
  trimeter: three feet tetrameter: four feet
- pentameter: five feet
  hexameter: six feet
  et octameter: eight feet
- The number of feet in a line, coupled with the name of the foot, describes the metrical qualities of that line.

Metaphor

- A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two unlike things, without using the word like or as. Metaphors assert the identity of dissimilar things, as when Macbeth asserts that life is a "brief candle." Metaphors can be subtle and powerful, and can transform people, places, objects, and ideas into whatever the writer imagines them to be.

Implied metaphor

- more subtle comparison; the terms being compared are not so specifically explained. For example, to describe a stubborn man unwilling to leave, one could say that he was "a mule standing his ground." This is a fairly explicit metaphor; the man is being compared to a mule. But to say that the man "brayed his refusal to leave" is to create an implied metaphor, because the subject (the man) is never overtly identified as a mule. Braying is associated with the mule, a notoriously stubborn creature, and so the comparison between the stubborn man and the mule is sustained. Implied metaphors can slip by inattentive readers who are not sensitive to such carefully chosen, highly concentrated language.

Extended metaphor

- a sustained comparison in which part or all of a poem consists of a series of related metaphors. Robert Francis's poem "Catch" relies on an extended metaphor that compares poetry to playing catch.

Controlling metaphor

- runs through an entire work and determines the form or nature of that work. The controlling metaphor in Anne Bradstreet’s poem "The Author to Her Book" likens her book to a child.

Synecdoche

- is a kind of metaphor in which a part of something is used to signify the whole, as when a gossip is called a "wagging tongue," or when ten ships are called "ten sails." Sometimes, synecdoche refers to the whole being used to signify the part, as in the phrase "Boston won the baseball game." Clearly, the entire city of Boston did not participate in the game; the whole of Boston is being used to signify the individuals who played and won the game.

Metonymy

- is a type of metaphor in which something closely associated with a subject is substituted for it. In this way, we speak of the "silver screen" to mean motion pictures, "the crown" to stand for the king, "the White House" to stand for the activities of the president.

Meter

- When a rhythmic pattern of stresses recurs in a poem, it is called meter. Metrical patterns are determined by the type and number of feet in a line of verse; combining the name of a line length with the name of a foot concisely describes the meter of the line. Rising meter refers to metrical feet which move from unstressed to stressed sounds, such as the iambic foot and the anapestic foot. Falling meter refers to metrical feet which move from stressed to unstressed sounds, such as the trochaic foot and the dactylic foot.

Personification

- A form of metaphor in which human characteristics are attributed to nonhuman things. Personification offers the writer a way to give the world life and motion by assigning familiar human behaviors and emotions to animals, inanimate objects, and abstract ideas. For example, in Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the speaker refers to the urn as an "unravished bride of quietness."

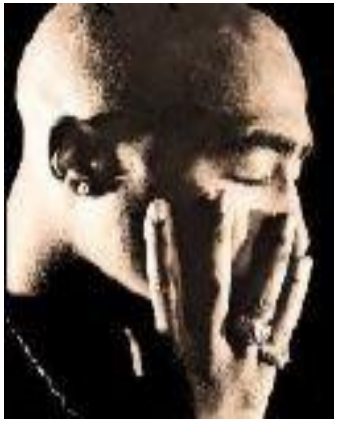
Point of View

- Refers to who tells us a story and how it is told. What we know and how we feel about the events in a work are shaped by the author's choice of point of view. The teller of the story, the narrator, inevitably affects our understanding of the characters' actions by filtering what is told through his or her own perspective. The various points of view that writers draw upon can be grouped into two broad categories: (1) the third-person narrator uses he, she, or they to tell the story and does not participate in the action; and (2) the first-person narrator uses I and is a major or minor participant in the action. In addition, a second-person narrator, you, is also possible, but is rarely used because of the awkwardness of thrusting the reader into the story, as in "You are minding your own business on a park bench when a drunk steps out and demands your lunch bag." An objective point of view employs a third-person narrator who does not see into the mind of any character. From this detached and impersonal perspective, the narrator reports action and dialogue without telling us directly what the characters think and feel. Since no analysis or interpretation is provided by the narrator, this point of view places a premium on dialogue, actions, and details to reveal character to the reader.

Quatrain

- A four-line stanza. Quatrains are the most common stanzaic form in the English language; they can have various meters and rhyme schemes.

In the Depths of Solitude



i exist in the depths of solitude
pondering my true goal
trying 2 find peace of mind
and still preserve my soul
constantly yearning 2 be accepted
and from all receive respect
never comprising but sometimes risky
and that is my only regret
a young heart with an old soul
how can there be peace
how can i be in the depths of solitude
when there r 2 inside of me
this duo within me causes
the perfect oppurtunity
2 learn and live twice as fast
as those who accept simplicity

Rhyme

- The repetition of identical or similar concluding syllables in different words, most often at the ends of lines. Rhyme is predominantly a function of sound rather than spelling; thus, words that end with the same vowel sounds rhyme, for instance, day, prey, bouquet, weigh, and words with the same consonant ending rhyme, for instance vain, feign, rein, lane. Words do not have to be spelled the same way or look alike to rhyme. In fact, words may look alike but not rhyme at all. This is called eye rhyme, as with bough and cough, or brow and blow.

Rhythm

- A term used to refer to the recurrence of stressed and unstressed sounds in poetry. Depending on how sounds are arranged, the rhythm of a poem may be fast or slow, choppy or smooth. Poets use rhythm to create pleasurable sound patterns and to reinforce meanings. Rhythm in prose arises from pattern repetitions of sounds and pauses that create looser rhythmic effects.

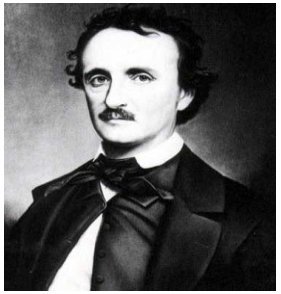
Simile

- A common figure of speech that makes an explicit comparison between two things by using words such as like, as, than, appears, and seems: "A sip of Mrs. Cook's coffee is like a punch in the stomach." The effectiveness of this simile is created by the differences between the two things compared. There would be no simile if the comparison were stated this way: "Mrs. Cook's coffee is as strong as the cafeteria's coffee." This is a literal translation because Mrs. Cook's coffee is compared with something like it—another kind of coffee.

Stanza

- In poetry, stanza refers to a grouping of lines, set off by a space, that usually has a set pattern of meter and rhyme.

It was many and many a year ago
In a kingdom by the sea
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.
–Edgar Allen Poe



Tercet

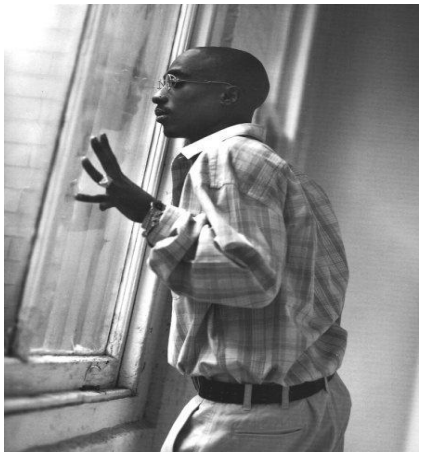
- A three-line stanza.

Example:
"All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told.
Many a man his life hath sold…"
– *The Merchant of Venice*

Tone

- The author's implicit attitude toward the reader or the people, places, and events in a work as revealed by the elements of the author's style. Tone may be characterized as serious or ironic, sad or happy, private or public, angry or affectionate, bitter or nostalgic, or any other attitudes and feelings that human beings experience.

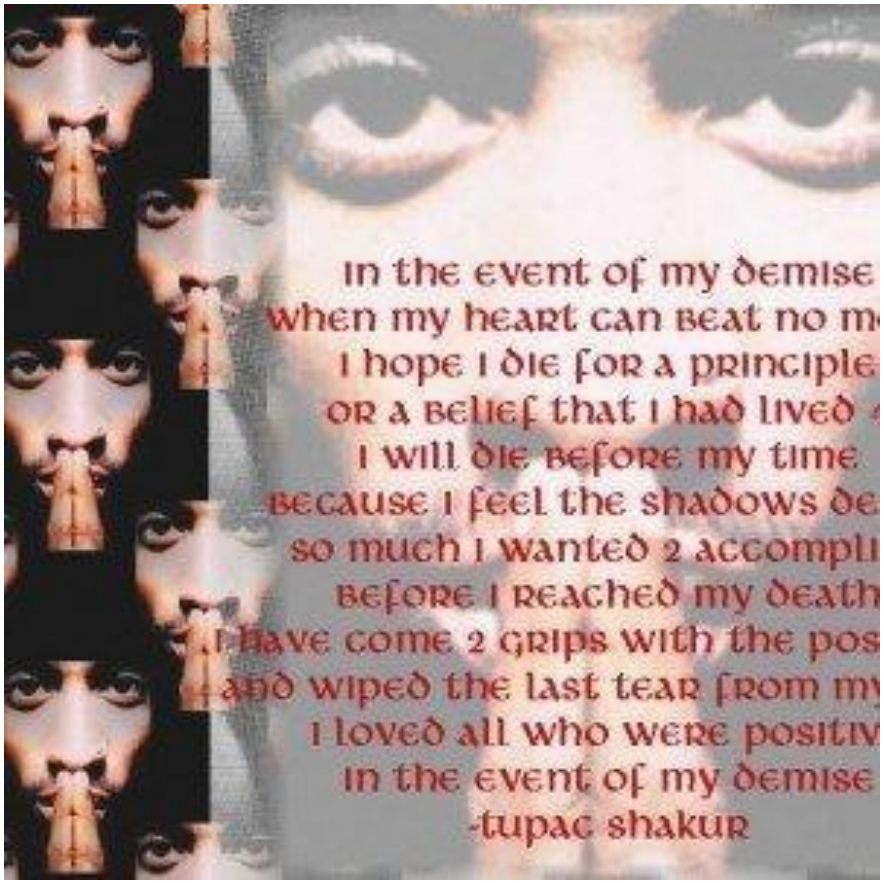
Examples: The gloom and representation of decay is the main tone of Poe's *The Fall of* *the House of Usher; the tone of Catch-22 is one of sarcasm and absurdity. Tupac's poems often have a tone of loneliness and sadness.*



Verse

- A generic term used to describe poetic lines composed in a measured rhythmical pattern, that are often, but not necessarily, rhymed.

In the Even of My Demise



WORKS CITED

- http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/literature/bedlit/default.htm